



The Edit

Editorial

Fish Vs. Human Life

It seems another group of tree-hugging environmentalists has stepped out of the closet and filed a lawsuit to stop the construction of Highway 189 in Provo Canyon. These self-titled saviors of the wilderness apparently feel the right to kill a fish is more valuable than the human lives lost on a dangerous road. They are putting the desires and idle pleasures of a few above the safety of many and we should not have to stand for it.

In the ultimate insult to common sense and intelligent thinking, a coalition of river users has filed a 30-page civil complaint in U.S. District Court, aimed at stopping construction on the highway. The complaint is against the Utah Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Thankfully, the suit does not bother to name the thousands of people to drive the canyon everyday and surely disrupt the peaceful fishing along the Provo River.

It is a shame the project can get so close to finally becoming a reality before being once-again challenged by those seeking to "protect" a resource. We submit that a human life is a much more valuable resource and should be protected at all costs. Perhaps the residents of Wasatch County should in turn sue those seeking to stop the project, as every action to delay construction further endangers our lives. In the

eight-year period from 1979 to 1986, 24 people were killed in fatal automobile accidents in Provo Canyon. Over a 15 year period, 36 people have been killed.

We suggest those seeking to stop the road improvements speak with the families of those killed along the highway and explain why the recreation resource is more valuable than human safety. We doubt they can make a valid argument in the face of so much suffering. Perhaps they should ride along with the ambulance crews of Wasatch and Utah counties to experience first-hand the tragedies incurred in Provo Canyon. Then, tell the good citizens of Wasatch County how valuable a trout stream is compared to human safety.

We defy anyone to show how a few miles of river have more benefit to our community than human life. In fact no one has proven, to our satisfaction, that the road improvements will have a lasting detrimental effect on the fisheries and other recreational resources of Provo Canyon. If anything, the new road will provide improved angler access and better parking.

The challenge of balancing public good against preserving the environment is daunting at best, but when human lives are in danger, safety must win. The right to dip a fly in the Provo River may be important, but that right will never have more value than the right to live.

Restraining Order Denied For Canyon Construction

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Construction continues along Highway 189 in Provo Canyon after U.S. District Court Judge Tena Campbell denied a temporary restraining order aimed at stopping the project last week. A coalition of environmentalists filed a lawsuit to halt the project on Feb. 29, charging that state and federal transportation officials failed to fully study the environmental impacts associated with the construction.

Utah Department of Transportation Officials voluntarily stopped construction for four days earlier this month to meet with the environmentalists in an effort to avoid court action. But those talks apparently were not successful and construction crews have returned to

work. UDOT estimates the four day shut-down cost taxpayers \$100,000. More hearings on the lawsuit are expected this week.

The \$34 million project will widen Highway 189 two four lanes in a two mile stretch between Vivian Park and Wildwood as UDOT works to improve the highway all the way to Heber City. Proponents of the plan say the new road will make driving safer for residents of Wasatch and Duchesne counties.

Those against the project claim the construction will destroy trout habitat in the Provo River and the money would be better spent elsewhere.